



February 27, 2023  
William Freeman  
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**RE: S.B.979: An Act Promoting Energy Affordability, Energy Efficiency & Green Cities**

Thank you to the Environmental Committee leadership, Governor Lamont, and Commissioner Dykes for introducing SB 979 and hearing my comments today

**I am writing in strong support of [SB 979](#), specifically the adoption of a statewide stretch code because:**

- The building sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the State of Connecticut.
- As someone who has served on the Guilford Planning & Zoning Commission since 2019, municipalities want options to require greater energy efficiency to reduce their residents' energy burden, reduce local air pollution, and increase the quality of their building stock.

In addition to my service on the P & Z commission, I have also been a real estate developer and energy efficient builder for over thirty years in Connecticut, so I have deep knowledge of building codes, how they are adopted, enforced, and construction methods and practices.

- I strongly support a stretch code with energy efficiency targets for the building envelope, airtightness, insulation, and equipment to make sure that the stretch code does not become obsolete, relative to the statewide building code.
- I built my own all-electric Zero Energy Passive House in 2018 and I recommend including a preference for electrification in the stretch code because the typical lifecycle of a home is sixty years, and it is vital to futureproof our building stock to reduce GHG emissions. Additionally, Guilford is a certified Silver Sustainable CT community and the ability to ensure that new construction will not increase local air pollution and will encourage the growth of the clean energy economy is important to the town's vitality.
- CT should adopt a stretch code that does not require onsite/offsite renewables since this could be prohibitive in cities. Rather, Connecticut should follow Massachusetts' example and require a Zero Energy Ready construction stretch code to avoid costly retrofits to add solar in the future.
- For the stretch code to be effective, it will be important to include a process for development, education, interpretation, and enforcement. The development of a statewide stretch code should be managed by the Office of the State Building Inspector (OSBI) and the Codes and Standards Committee including opportunity for public comment.
- Additionally, to ensure successful implementation, provisions for education for contractors, architects, and other building professionals, training for local code officials, and enforcement should be included.
- Finally, utilization of green building and high-performance standards are growing, so I recommend that the stretch code identify alternate compliance paths such as Passive House, LEED Gold, or Living Building Certifications to streamline compliance and enforcement.



In 2014, I incorporated the Passive House standard and the Dept. of Energy's Zero Ready program into all the homes my firm builds. I am proud that these homes are healthier, more comfortable, deliver substantially reduced utility costs for occupants and are helping the state meet its GHG reduction goals.

I know firsthand that buildings last a long time. New construction being built today will be standing in 2050. As a Connecticut resident, we need to give municipalities the tools they need to encourage any new construction is futureproofed/Zero-Energy ready.

Respectively,

*William Freeman*

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